

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00

FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

EPG-02 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15 OES-07

SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 PA-02 PRS-01

/159 W

-----230623Z 001724 /13

R 230501Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5454

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY QUITO

USLO RIYADH

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

PPWLI/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 133

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS DHAHRAN 0592

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, SA

SUBJECT: FIRE AT ARAMCO'S ABQAIQ FACILITY

1. ON MAY 19 ARAMCO CHAIRMAN FRANK JUNGERS HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE FOR SAUDI JOURNALISTS AND STATED THAT ARAMCO EXPECTS TO RESTORE ITS TOTAL PRODUCTION LEVEL TO THE APRIL 30 PRE-FIRE LEVEL BY THE END OF MAY. REPAIR WORK IS PROCEEDING SO RAPIDLY, ACCORDING TO JUNGERS, THAT THE COMPANY EXPECTS TO OBTAIN 90 PERCENT OF THE END OF APRIL PRODUCTION LEVEL BY MAY 24. ARAMCO'S ABQAIQ FACILITIES HAVE BEEN PROCESSING CRUDE OIL FOR SEVERAL DAYS, AND SOME CRUDE HAS ALSO BEEN DIVERTED AROUND THE ABQAIQ PLANT. A MULTI-NATIONAL WORK FORCE OF 2,000 UN USING HUGE FLEETS OF CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT IS WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK TO RESTORE THE LOST PRODUCTION CAPACITY.

2. THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM FOR A GROUP OF SAUDI JOURNALISTS REPRESENTING ALL SAUDI DAILY NEWSPAPERS, A WEEKLY PUBLICATION, AND THE SAUDI PRESS AGENCY. THE JOURNALISTS WERE ALSO FLOWN OVER THE SITE OF THE FIRE, GIVEN EXTENSIVE BRIEFINGS ON THE GROUND WITH BLOWN UP MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS, AND THEN FLOWN TO RAS TANURA TO OBSERVE HOW MUCH CRUDE OIL IS REACHING THE BIG MARINE TERMINAL. ARAMCO ARRANGED THE TOUR AND PRESS CONFERENCE IN AN ATTEMPT TO DAMPEN DOWN WIDESPREAD RUMORS ABOUT THE EXTENT OF LOSSES AND DURATION OF REDUCED PRODUCTION.

3. JUNGERS SAID THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSION, WHICH OCCURRED SEVEN FEET UNDERGROUND, WAS EXTERNAL CORROSION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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A SHORT SECTION OF A 30 YEAR OLD, 30- INCH PIPELINE.

4. ARAMCO STILL HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO COME UP WITH AN ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL FINANCIAL LOSS DUE TO THE FIRE. EXECUTIVES HAVE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PLANT WAS INSURED THROUGH LLOYDS OF LONDON AND THE COMPANY WILL BE REIMBURSED FOR MOST OF THE LOSS.

5. THE SAUDI MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM HAS ANNOUNCED SAUDI ARABIA'S PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL. PRODUCTION TOTALED 299,848,418 BARRELS, BROKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

BERRI 22,821,374
ARABIAN LIGHT 215,196,252
ARABIAN MEDIUM 14,382,937
ARABIAN HEAVY 47,447,855

AVERAGE PRODUCTION WAS 9,994,947 BPD. AVERAGE

EXPORTS WERE 9,475,244 BPD, OF WHICH ARAMCO
ACCOUNTED FOR 9,317,845 BPD, THE ARABIAN OIL COMPANY
(JAPAN) LUUNTEE BPD AND GETTY OIL 69,866 BPD.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, PETROLEUM PRODUCTION, FIRES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DHAHRA00592
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770182-1039
Format: TEL
From: DHAHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770529/aaaaazcd.tel
Line Count: 120
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 67c2428c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2411352
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIRE AT ARAMCO'S ABQAIQ FACILITY
TAGS: ENRG, SA, ARAMCO, (JUNGERS, FRANK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/67c2428c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009